

International Certificates Of Vaccination

A revision of the immunization form required for international travel was made available in July 1953 by the Public Health Service.

Titled "International Certificates of Vaccination," and approved by the World Health Organization, the revised form provides travelers with a record of their compliance with the vaccination requirements of all nations governed by the International Sanitary Regulations. It contains certificates for vaccination or revaccination against smallpox, cholera, and yellow fever and has space for recording other immunizations such as typhus, typhoid-paratyphoid, plague, and tetanus. The principal changes are:

Smallpox and cholera certificates must bear the approved stamp called for on the certificates. The signature alone of the certifying officer is not acceptable, nor does it make the certificate valid. (In the United States, the approved stamp is that of the local or State health department in the area where the immunizing physician practices, of the Department of Defense, or of a designated yellow fever vaccination center, or it may be the seal of the Public Health Service. If the local health officer does not have an identifying stamp, undoubtedly the State health officer can validate the certificate.)

Only the primary vaccination for smallpox must be inspected and the results recorded. On revaccination, the smallpox certificate is immediately valid, whereas previously a 14-day wait was required.

The cholera certificate becomes valid beginning 6 days after the first injection or immediately in the instance of revaccination. Previously, the entire injection series had to be completed before the certificate became valid. (In the United States, two injections are given

for the initial series. Travelers are advised to take the second inoculation because the type of vaccine used in this country provides maximum protection only after the second injection.)

The period of validity for the yellow fever vaccination certificate has been extended from 4 to 6 years. (In the United States, yellow fever vaccination certificates are valid only when the inoculation is obtained from a yellow fever vaccination center designated by the Public Health Service. The international regulations require a nation to designate specific vaccination centers for this purpose and to use vaccine approved by the World Health Organization.)

The text is printed in both English and French, but entries may be completed in either language.

The new form is distributed with all passport applications issued by the clerks of the court in any city in the United States and by the passport agencies of the State Department in Boston, New York City, San Francisco, New Orleans, Chicago, and Washington, D. C. It may also be obtained from local or State health departments and from Public Health Service facilities. It is identified by number as PHS-731, revised November 1952. Copies may be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, United States Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C., for 5 cents each, or \$2.50 a hundred.

Travelers to countries where passports are not needed but where immunization is required may also obtain the form from the above sources.

Although the new form replaces the previous International Certificate of Inoculation and Vaccination, the old form will be acceptable in international travel until the expiration date of recorded examinations. Also, agencies still holding stock of the old form may continue to distribute it until the supply is depleted. Inquiry concerning use, distribution, and availability of the new form and restrictions on the use of the old certificate should be directed to the Division of Foreign Quarantine, Bureau of Medical Services, Public Health Service, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington 25, D. C.

*Prepared by the Division of Foreign Quarantine,
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